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TO AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: TPHY, OSCI, TBIO, IN

SUBJECT: VISIT OF DR. C. GOPALAN

REFERENCES: (A) NEW DELHI 14103, (B) NEW DELHI 14104

1. GOPALAN VISIT FRUSTRATING EXPERIENCE FOR DHEW AND FURTHER DISCOURAGED EXPECTATIONS OF EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION AND COLLABORATION IN BIOMEDICAL RESEARCH AND HEALTH SCIENCES UPON ARRIVAL GOPALAN ASKED FIC/SFCPB TO DEFER DISCUSSION OF APPOINTMENTS UNTIL 0800 SATURDAY 10 OCTOBER. DURING 25-MINUTE VISIT BETWEEN GOPALAN'S APPEARANCE AT HOTEL AND ENTERING 0900 MEETING AT NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES, HE REQUESTED THAT TEN TENTATIVE APPOINTMENTS WITH DHEW PERSONS WHO WANTED TO SEE HIM, INCLUDING SOME SUGGESTED BY SCIATT IN REFTEL (A), BE CANCELED. HE WANTED APPOINTMENTS ONLY WITH DRS. NEVA AND MILLER, NIAID; HERBERT BLUMENTHAL, FDA; AND WORLD BANK BETWEEN 1430 AND 1700 ON MONDAY, A HOLIDAY; TUESDAY; AND WEDNESDAY. FIC, OPERATING WITH ONLY 50 PERCENT

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STAFF, WAS COMPLETELY COMMITTED FOR THESE THREE DAYS TO

PREPARATION AND PARTICIPATION IN BIOMEDICAL RESEARCH SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING WITH EGYPTIAN, CHAIRED BY DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR SCIENCE, NIH. COULD NOT PROVIDE PERSONAL MESSENGER SERVICE REQUESTED BY GOPALAN OR CUSTOMARY TRANSPORTATION AND AMENITIES. HE COULD NOT BE REACHED DIRECTLY BY TELEPHONE AND REPORTED HE DID NOT GET FIC MESSAGES. HE MISSED TUESDAY AFTERNOON APPOINTMENT WITH NEVA AND MILLER. THEY LATER MET HIM AT 2000 ON WEDNESDAY AT HIS WASHINGTON HOTEL.

2. NEVA REPORTS SATISFACTORY VISIT. MILLER, AT GOPALAN'S INVITATION, WILL PROBABLY MAKE TWO-WEEK VISIT LATE DECEMBER OR, MORE LIKELY, JANUARY TO MALARIA RESEARCH CENTERS. TRAVEL DETAILS WILL BE PROVIDED WHEN FIRM. SMALL WORKSHOP DISCUSSED A YEAR AGO, TO BE HELD SPRING 1977, ON FEASIBILITY OF EXTENDING NIH IMMUNOLOGICAL STUDIES TO INDIA, HAS CHANGED IN CHARACTER AND WILL BE RESCHEDULED. ICMR HAS INTERESTED PHARMACEUTICAL MANUFACTURERS IN SUBJECT AND MILLER HAS BEEN INVITED TO EXPANDED MEETING IN FALL 1977.

3. GOPALAN HIGHLY PLEASED WITH OTTESEN COLLABORATION. IN RESPONSE TO NEVA'S QUESTION ON EXPEDITING CUSTOMS CLEARANCE FOR SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT SUCH AS TRANSPORTED BY OTTESEN, GOPALAN RECOMMENDED SENDING THEM TO SCIATT. NIH INFORMED WEIGHT LIMITATIONS PRECLUDE SENDING SUCH ITEMS BY POUCH. SCIATT'S SUGGESTIONS FOR TRANSPORTING SUCH ITEMS TO EXPEDITE CUSTOMS CLEARANCE REQUESTED.

4. STATUS OF STROKE STUDY, 01-125-N, REPORTED TO GOPALAN. HE WAS GIVEN COPY OF STATE'S 240736, DATED 28 SEPTEMBER, FOR LATER DISCUSSION DURING HIS VISIT HERE. AS FIC HAD ANTICIPATED AND INFORMED TECHNICAL MERIT REVIEWERS, HIS IMMEDIATE REACTION WAS REFUSAL TO ACCEPT REDUCTION IN TIME AND AMOUNT AND RECOMMENDATION FOR FEASIBILITY STUDY. HE EXPLAINED THAT HE HAD GONE TO GREAT LENGTHS TO DEFEND PROJECT AS ONE ESSENTIAL FOR NIH COLLABORATION AND U.S. RUPEE SUPPORT AGAINST GREAT PRESSURES TO FUND IT UNDER THE DEPARTMENT OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM PREFERRED BY GOI AND WAS EXPECTING DR. TOWER TO GIVE "GREEN LIGHT" FOR PROJECT DURING VISIT. NIH DECISION PLACED GOPALAN IN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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UNTENABLE POSITION OF DEFENDING PROJECT OF QUESTIONABLE MERIT AND WITHOUT FULL U.S. SUPPORT. FOR THESE REASONS, HE HAD NO ALTERNATIVE BUT TO WITHDRAW IT AND DID NOT WANT TO DISCUSS PROJECT FURTHER WITH ANYONE BUT TOWER.

5. AT TIME OF DISCUSSION, 10 OCTOBER, FIC DID NOT EXPECT TOWER AND GOPALAN TO MEET IN INDIA BECAUSE OF GOPALAN'S ABSENCE. WHEN GOPALAN INFORMED OF TOWER'S SCHEDULED VISIT

WITH DR. V. N. RAO, ICMR, PER REFTEL (B), GOPALAN STATED
RAO WAS NEW AND DID NOT KNOW BACKGROUND OF PROJECT. HE
REQUESTED FIC CABLE SCIATT AND TOWER THAT RAO NOT AUTHOR-
IZED TO MAKE ANY COMMITMENT CONCERNING PROJECT; ONLY
GOPALAN COULD DO THIS. BEFORE CABLE COULD BE SENT, TOWER
UNEXPECTEDLY RETURNED TO OFFICE ON 12 OCTOBER. TOWER
COULD NOT MEET GOPALAN AT HOTEL AS REQUESTED BY GOPALAN,

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BUT THEY ARE TENTATIVELY PLANNING TO MEET IN NEW DELHI.

6. FIC WILL DEFER REQUESTING REVIEW FOR PROTECTION OF
RIGHTS OF HUMAN SUBJECTS AND TRANSMITTAL OF AGREEMENT TO
EMBASSY UNTIL RECEIVING REPORT OF NEW DELHI DISCUSSIONS
WITH TOWER AND SCIATT. HABIB

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